

U.S. Application No.: 09/811,971

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IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-22. Canceled

23. (Currently Amended) In a vendor order server, a method of processing order messages by a predetermined sequence of instructions tangibly embodied on an instruction medium executable by a processor responsive to the instructions via an ordering network from a customer ordering application comprising:

defining an order message format having order data elements and order type elements, the order message format adaptable to a plurality of order type elements, each order type element corresponding to a different ordering application;

defining an order response format corresponding to a response expected by the customer ordering application, the order response format corresponding to the ordering application;

receiving, via the ordering network, an order message in the order message format corresponding to a previous order message, the order message having an order data set in the order data elements and an order type in the order type element, the order message having a customer ID indicative of the customer ordering application and an order ID indicative of the previous order message;

parsing an order type from the order type element to identify an order type, the order type indicative of an ordering function performable by at least one of a plurality of order processing modules;

selectively invoking, based on the parsed order type, a particular one of the plurality of order processing modules corresponding to the order type, the invoking operable to route the order data set in the received order message to the invoked order processing module, identifying the order type including parsing according to the predetermined

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format to identify tagged attributes indicative of the order types, and processing by the order server further comprises indexing a mapping of order types to order processing modules;

interacting with an order database coupled to the order server based on the message type, the order database responsive to the order processing module for transferring data corresponding to the parsed order type, the order id and the customer ID;

processing, based on the interacting, the routed order data set by the order processing module to generate an order response message corresponding to the order ID in the order response format; and

transmitting the order response message to the customer ordering application corresponding to the customer ID, the order response format corresponding to an application database maintained by the ordering application, the defined order message format and order response format accessible to the ordering application and the order server from predetermined types indicative of a predetermined format; processing further comprising processing in an automated manner that maps data items from the response message at the application database according to application instructions.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23 further comprising receiving the order response message by the ordering application and processing the order response message by employing the predetermined types in an automated manner according to application instructions.
25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein defining further comprises defining the order message format and order response format in a predetermined set of markup language definitions commonly accessible to both the order server and the user application.

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26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25 wherein receiving further comprises receiving the order response message in the order response format recognizable via the commonly accessible markup definitions that define the predetermined format.
27. (Canceled)
28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 27 wherein the ordering application is conversant in XML and the order response format is an XML document type indicative of an XML element expected by the ordering application.
29. (Canceled)
30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 wherein the order message format is an XML document definition and the order data elements and order type elements are XML tags in the XML document definition, wherein the order response format is operable for integration into an ordering database responsive to the order application.
31. (Currently Amended) In a vendor order server, a computer program product having a computer readable medium operable to store computer program logic embodied in a set of instructions tangible embodied in computer program code encoded thereon and executable by a processor responsive to the set of instructions processing order messages via an ordering network from a customer ordering application comprising:  
defining an order message format having order data elements and order type elements, the order message format adaptable to a plurality of order type elements, each order type element corresponding to a different ordering application;

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defining an order response format corresponding to a response expected by the customer ordering application, defining further comprising defining the order message format and order response format in a predetermined set of markup language definitions commonly accessible to both the order server and the user application;

receiving, via the ordering network, an order message in the order message format corresponding to a previous order message, the order message having an order data set in the order data elements and an order type in the order type element, the order message having a customer ID indicative of the customer ordering application and an order ID indicative of the previous order message, receiving further comprising receiving the order response message by the ordering application and processing the order response message by employing the predetermined types in an automated manner according to application instructions;

parsing an order type from the order type element to identify an order type, the order type indicative of an ordering function performable by at least one of a plurality of order processing modules;

selectively invoking, based on the parsed order type, a particular one of the plurality of order processing modules corresponding to the order type, the invoking operable to route the order data set in the received order message to the invoked order processing module, identifying the order type including parsing according to the predetermined format to identify tagged attributes indicative of the order types and processing by the order server further comprises indexing a mapping of order types to order processing modules;

interacting with an order database coupled to the order server based on the message type, the order database responsive to the order processing module for transferring data corresponding to the parsed order type, the order id and the customer ID;

processing, based on the interacting, the routed order data set by the order processing module to generate an order response message corresponding

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to the order ID in the order response format, processing further comprising processing in an automated manner that maps data items from the response message at the application database without manual reentry of data items via an interactive interface, such that identifying the message type involves parsing according to the predetermined format to identify tagged attributes indicative of the message types and processing by the order server further comprises indexing a mapping of order types to order processing modules; and

transmitting the order response message to the customer ordering application corresponding to the customer ID, the order response format corresponding to an application database maintained by the ordering application, the defined order message format and order response format accessible to the ordering application and the order server from predetermined types indicative of a predetermined format,

receiving further comprising receiving the order response message in the order response format recognizable via the commonly accessible markup definitions that define the predetermined format, the ordering application being conversant in markup languages and the order response format being a markup document type indicative of a markup element expected by the ordering application, the order message format being an markup document definition and the order data elements and order type elements being markup tags in the markup document definition, such that the order response format is operable for integration into an ordering database responsive to the order application; the order message and the order response message corresponding to a common order transaction between a particular customer and supplier.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31 wherein receiving the order message further comprises receiving an order message and order type corresponding to a specific order.

33. (Canceled).

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34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3331 wherein the order message and the order response message each have a sender and recipient, such that the senders and recipients of the order message and the order response message are limited to the customer and supplier of the order transaction, and the order message and order response message are not replicated to a plurality of recipients.